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Identical letters dated 25 April 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I am writing to you in your capacity as the president of the Security Council to once again alert the members of the Council to the dangerous and destabilizing actions of the Iranian proxy Hezbollah in our region.

Hezbollah, the internationally designated terror organization, continues unabated to build up its military infrastructure in the towns and villages of southern Lebanon, in clear violation of Security Council resolutions 1701 (2006) and 1559 (2004).

The evidence of Hezbollah's continuous violations is mounting each day and is overwhelmingly apparent. In fact, it was reported that, on 20 April 2017, Hezbollah conducted a tour for dozens of journalists along the Lebanese side of the demarcation line between Lebanon and Israel. The journalists witnessed and took pictures of Hezbollah fighters in full military regalia stationed along the route, holding guns and rocket-propelled grenade launchers.

Following the incident, a statement to the media was made by the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), saying that shortly before the media delegation reached the area that morning, the Lebanese army notified UNIFIL of a media tour along the Blue Line, without mentioning any other details.

This announcement clearly indicates that the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) were aware of Hezbollah's intention to conduct this tour in advance and serves as alarming proof of the growing cooperation between Hezbollah and LAF.

It is extremely disturbing that armed Hezbollah militants feel free to move openly in the UNIFIL area of operation, without being challenged by UNIFIL or LAF personnel.

The well-documented and photographic proof of this blatant provocation once again verifies the maintenance of arms by Hezbollah in southern Lebanon, in clear violation of Security Council resolutions 1701 (2006) and 1559 (2004). This recent report adds to other evidence that demonstrates Hezbollah's ongoing efforts in strengthening its military infrastructure in southern Lebanon. Hezbollah has been building up its arsenal by smuggling weapons from Syria into Lebanon; and according to recent publications utilizes weapons production factories built by Iran on Lebanese territory.

The results of Hezbollah's military build-up are evident — the terrorist organization has amassed over 150,000 rockets and missiles, positioning its arsenal

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in the midst of the civilian population throughout southern Lebanon. Today, more than two thirds of the civilian structures in the Shiite villages of southern Lebanon have become an integral part of Hezbollah's military array.

Lebanese President Michel Aoun stated in a recent interview that Hezbollah's weapons complement the action of the Lebanese army. Furthermore, the ministerial statement of the Lebanese Council of Ministers of 28 December 2016 emphasizes the right of Lebanese citizens to "resist" Israel.

It is thus evident that the Lebanese Government is not only failing to fulfil its obligations under Security Council resolutions 1701 (2006) and 1559 (2004), but is in fact actively encouraging and legitimizing Hezbollah's activities in clear violation of these resolutions.

The worrisome trend of Hezbollah's continued military build-up has serious repercussions for the stability of the region, Lebanon's future and the ability of its Government to exercise full governance within its country.

The international community cannot continue to turn a blind eye to Hezbollah's flagrant violations of Security Council resolutions 1701 (2006) and 1559 (2004). The Council must send a strong message to the Government of Lebanon and demand that it fully implement these resolutions, not only in word but in concrete action.

It is also imperative that reports presented by the Secretary-General to the Security Council on the implementation of Council resolutions 1701 (2006) and 1559 (2004) clearly represent the ongoing violations of the resolutions.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter distributed as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Danny **Danon**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative